UP FROM THE HILLS

N·C HANKS

HIS STORY

HV 1792
H26
1921

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HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

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INTRODUCTORY

Simplicity is the evidence of greatness!

People who are really educated know what to do next.

Religion is the inherent longing in the human soul to answer harmoniously the call of the Great Divine.

A person's grade of intelligence may be rated by his sense of humor.

We are born alone; we work alone; we succeed alone; we fail alone; and, last, but not least, we die alone.

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H26

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By N. C. Hanks, Heber, Utah

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UP FROM THE HILLS

By N. C. Hanks

CHAPTER I.

CAME up from the hills. Followed that long, crooked, slippery trail that winds between the crests of the cliffs, over the rocks, by the pine trees, and through the snow drifts.

My boyhood days were spent there. The meadows, mountains, valleys, and murmuring pines were all my playmates. Many mock battles went on; even the Weaver of Dreams, Zane Gray's Buck Dewaine and Riders of the Purple Sage were very insignificant to compare with some of the characters of my boyish dreams.

After I was graduated from the swimming-pool, the cow herding, and the dog and pony days I was kicked and cuffed through seven grades of a very ordinary country school in Charleston, Utah, the place where I discovered America. As I look back over those methods of instruction, I wonder which end of

my body they were trying to educate—or if they had misunderstood the location of my brains. The wonderful age of sixteen arrived with all its likes and dislikes, choices and choosings, sweethearting, and teasing. The trip to the University interrupted my boyish pranks. I worked for the money. It seemed the only way to get it. And when I broke off the family tree, Dad cut me loose to pay my own debts. So through the coming years of seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, and twenty I worked for resources and went to school whenever I could. My record at the University was not a brilliant one, as the pauses to get cash were frequent. However, I finished my second year in the commercial college and acquired an appetite for more education, but the money had to come first and faster. I bade adieu to the old farm with all its happiness, plenty and memories, and went away to the mines as fast as I could go.

CHAPTER II.

I saw the carloads of ore coming out of the mountain sides. It looked good to me, and I said to myself, "Here's where I make a raise." So during the vacations from school I learned to be a miner. It is a hazardous game, especially for those who lack experience. Often fortune's rosy lips pose with what seems a kiss, and then through mismanagement, or just plain bad luck, that proffered caress turns to bitter disappoint-

ment. Misfortune followed me in my mining days. A disaster at the Daly West mine, Park City, Utah, in which twenty-eight men lost their lives, made my first job possible. After I had worked thirty days, a ladder broke on which I was descending, and I fell twenty feet into the bottom of the winze (a perpendicular passage cut through the stone for the ladder and ore shoot). Mishaps like these were very common. Two nights before the ladder broke with me, a man was crushed to death in the cage while we looked on, helpless and horrified. Later, on a contract job, a premature blast tore off most of my clothes, and left me with a broken finger and an ugly hole in my back.

There is a fascination in mining which I remember yet. How we dug in the dark, cold, slimy wet; we saw the glittering silver sparkle in the gleam of the candle's dim light. It looked like a halo of fortune peering at us. Oh you miners all know what a charm there is in hunting for gold! It has worked clear down through the ages, and for this selfsame lustre many great men have given their lives. The contract work at the mines went on with a jump. The goal was reached and the money won when our contract work was finished at American Fork. We found a splendid mine near Nephi on Mount Nebo on which we took a lease.

How well I remember that rainy October noon when we loaded the burros and started away, the

old gray burro leading with his bell and his pack. We went to the mountains—to the mountains, never to come back; 'Tis strange but we can never turn in our pathway of experience—we must go on. True, our hearts ache for things that are gone. But onward and forward the experience must come. 'Tis a wonderful school, but the tuition is high. The lesson it teaches rings strong and clear through those gorgeous mountains, that great line of snow-capped peaks standing like monuments to the glory of God. They usually bear a message of strength and peace to all who live in their shadows, or at least I found it so until the last year I was there. Forebodings seemed to gather everywhere. When I would go home I felt that I must be back at the mine, and when I returned it seemed that someone was calling me home. Even as the clouds gather before a storm, that inexplicable restlessness seemed to drive me on. The peace of the mountains was no more. An unavoidable something was waiting. I knew not where or what. Some great experience seemed to be calling me. The inevitable was pressing me on.

CHAPTER III.

Slowly up the mountain side over that picturesque trail, the burro train plodded, some dozen or more. Four of us fellows went along to keep things moving. I was following the last burro in the train, a nice,

little, brown yearling. When I came to the top of the first hill the owner of the burro train called to me and said, "Hanks, you watch that little donk. She will kick you if she gets a chance." The thing above all others that a burro can do well is to kick. They never miss their mark. Immediately I cut a long, limber willow and proceeded to tease Miss Burro thoroughly. While she was climbing up each steep hill I would catch hold of her tail. She tried her best to kick me every time, but just before she would get to the top of each hill I would let loose. She would go on until she reached firm footing and then she would wait and watch for me to come up where she could kick me, and then I would switch her. That little donkey remembered our trip to the mine and how I teased her. She watched me every day I was there. She would have kicked me sometime if I had stayed. In the gloom of that October night we unloaded the burros, and laid their burdens at our cabin door.

The lease was right, and the fellows were there, and when morning came we set to work. The tunnel planned, I drilled the holes. The dynamite lifted the rocks as the echoes of the blast sifted and rolled through the cliffs, silent and old. Nothing succeeds like success, and the work pushed on with a rush. The burro train went down time after time with packs of lead and silver until the car was loaded. What a

day of celebration! Only you who have worked for it know.

Then came the time for us to market, and, of course, the two older fellows must go. My partner and I stayed alone to forward the cause, while the old chaps went to town to pocket the cash. We worked like the devil for a couple of days. The third morning when old Sol rolled over the mountain in his setting of blue, he looked down upon a wonderful sight, the most beautiful in the world to me, pine trees, cliffs, and rocks, glittering, smiling, until my soul was lost in the silent ecstasy of it all. The Almighty tried Himself when he made such mornings as that. I am sure His best work was given to that rock-ribbed world that laughs as it goes. Laughs? Yes, it was bubbling with laughter! The whole great world was a song. Surely on such a morning Browning sang, "All's right with the world!"

CHAPTER IV.

The mischief that waited was in the blacksmith's shop. A box of caps and a coil of fuse were becoming wet in the drip of the melting frost. That wouldn't do, so I picked them up and put each in a cozy place in front of the rock where they could dry in the sun. They set there until noon, warming and stewing and waiting for the fatal touch.

Noontime came, holes were drilled, the blasting

must be done. It seemed a choice between us two. My partner stopped twice to pick up the caps, and when I told him to fix the dinner, he went on, and I picked up the box. Until my dying day I shall thank the Almighty Creator for the last glorious look over the mountains and cliffs. For with a slight bump of the caps, everything changed with a roar. Explosion? Yes! It had happened. Forebodings were over. I had waited one second too long. I intended to quit and go home, but oh, Great God, it was too late.

I found myself lying on the rocks about fifteen feet from where the explosion occurred. I immediately rolled over and stood up, calm, sane and collected. My hands were gone, my eyes were blind. Darkness loomed, the blood streamed. Where my left hand should have been, sharp bones protruded as I raised it to my face. The wreck of my right hand was even worse, mashed like sausage. I was not in extreme pain. My face was smarting as if I had been hit with a handful of gravel, my clothes were torn and burned, in fact, most of them were gone. My body was bruised and cut, and flying particles of copper had played havoc with my eyes. My partner wept and beat his head.

From that minute on, down, down I sped, worse and worse, until it seemed that I would die. It began with a walk up the trail to the cabin door. The

seat on the bed was a welcome place; the fire was made by my partner and the examination begun. He opened my right eye with his thumb and finger. "My God!" he said, "that one is gone."

The left eye was next in turn. He opened it wide. "Can't you see? That one looks good."

"You are not lying to me?" said I. "Look here, old man, if that one is gone I want you to tell me and right here is where I will take my medicine."

"No, I'm not lying, I can't see where that one is hurt at all."

"Is it worth a chance?"

"Yes."

"Then we had better tie it up and stop the blood, or this will all soon be over."

CHAPTER V.

So he did the tying job with a couple of strong linen handkerchiefs, one around each arm; he put them on with the strength of a mountain lad. They were tied like bracelets of iron. This I found out when I tried to chew them off after he had gone. He started on a fifteen mile trip for a doctor and help, and I lay down on the bed to await his return; here is where the real torture began. As my arms swelled under the pressure of those bandages, I had my first feast of real pain. It seemed as though my shoulders and arms were pushing through my body.

I tried to chew the bandages off, but my lips were gone and I couldn't find the knots. My rifle hung on a nail at the end of the cabin. I knew exactly where it was, all loaded and ready. To touch the trigger with my toe was a simple thing. "By Jove, I'll end this" was the thought that came. Immediately I sat up, but I was so dizzy I was not quite sure, and when I tried to put my feet down off the bed they wouldn't go, and I lay down once more.

Thoughts came. Nausea followed. I decided my days were ending; life's great glories were gone. I knew I was leaving the world of the living; everything was settling down. The torture grew steadily worse. My first inclination was to bewail my pitiful lot, and I had a desire to curse, but so near the brink I was slipping, fear stepped into the race, and finally a little prayer was uttered instead of a hideous curse.

"Oh, God, by all I hold sacred, if I must go through the world, crippled and blind, let it all end here, I pray You."

My feet were cold. Icy chills began to creep up my back. Each one seemed to follow the other from my feet up my spine out at the top of my head. As the day wore on they came more frequently and with a more pronounced shiver each time. After a while they started in my knees. My fire had gone out, and the puppy had howled himself to sleep. The chills were starting now in my hips. The fingers of old

Jack Frost were reaching farther and farther into my soul.

The rustle of the wind in the pines seemed farther away. Everything grew more quiet. The little pup whined for his petting. How I wished I could give it to him. And all day the silence grew thicker until, when night came, it seemed everything was gone. I could hear an occasional rustle, far, far away, and the thought pressed harder and harder upon me, "this, oh this, is my very last day." In that hour I realized my chance to be happy was gone, and I made up my mind firmly that I soon would be numbered with the dead.

CHAPTER VI.

A stone came tearing past the cabin, loosened by a horse's hoof on the trail above, and I thanked the good God of Mercy that the doctor and the fellows had come. Now I could ask them for a drink of water. Through all those hours I had been tortured most by thirst. I saw in my delirium the springs in the mountain with the clear, crystal water bubbling through the pebbles and sand. I would lie flat down in my dream and drink all I could. Then once more I would be aroused by excruciating thirst to find that it was only a dream!

A slight introduction and the doctor was there with this hypo needle all ready. How glad I was he

had come! He rebandaged my arms; opium and chloroform did the rest. I was peaceful and happy through the night, and when the gray dawn of morning lighted the way over the crags, the fellows loaded me on a stretcher made of canvas and boards, and down the mountain side, over the cliffs and ice they carried their burden to the bottom of the glorious gorge.

The first snow-flakes were falling as we came to the bubbling stream. They all took a drink but me, and I would have given worlds for one sip of good cold water as I heard it gurgling by. I asked for a drink, but the doctor said, "No, a drink of cold water would kill him; get ready to go." So they waded across. Several times they splashed and floundered while my soul was craving one draught of that water. We were nearing the last crossing; I knew it was there. I made up my mind I would jump in the creek, or at least I would try to. A curve in the trail left the doctor behind. They slipped me a cup of water. For many things I have been thankful, but that one cup of water was the best gift of God's giving, for I would have died from thirst. On they went to the jolting wagon. While the fellows were carrying me it did not seem so bad, but when they loaded me in the wagon there was a decided change. The mountain road had been newly made, and the rocks, holes, poles, and chucks were all there.

I knew when they found every one. We had no springs on the wagon. I could not sit up. To lie flat down in the bottom was my portion. That was some ride, but it was the best we could do. On to the depot we went.

CHAPTER VII.

The second day had waned in its shadows, when the train, hissing and grinding, started on its way to the hospital. It seemed like a panorama of madness. The train bumped and thumped. After an endless period of time, it all ceased and was over. I was lying on the station floor. They were hustling for an ambulance, and the last thing I knew they were carrying me once more. Then the doctor's familiar voice woke me.

"My boy, have you any choice as to who uses the knives?"

"No, Doctor, just please don't let me wake up."

"All right, smell this."

There seemed to be a deep roar; my thoughts went off in a jumble, round and round I sped like a wheel, and then it was over.

"We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away." We shall see each other clearly when we are through this world with work and play.

There is a recompensing feature that brings us prizes. When nature takes away her gifts, she repays some other way. My gift came in rest the next two

days. Places trimmed with gorgeous beauty decked the walls of dreams. People, draped in garbs I never saw before, glided up and down; yes, they were there in glorious array. Through my being I longed to stay. The rest that came was sweetened with breezes' peace and flowers' perfume. There were lights, but no lamps; music, but no musicians; flowers, but they did not grow out of the ground; understanding, but no words. The people moved, but did not walk; I understood so clearly, but could not speak. With peace and rest through those two days and nights I was blessed.

We are never entirely satisfied in life. There is always something more we wish for, or something we must have to make us happy, or at least, I have found it so. Contentment and satisfaction came to me completely when I was so near death's door, and the greatest desire of my life is to pass back to that situation. I would not do anything in the world that would send me there abnormally. I hope to go back some day just as God intended me to.

CHAPTER VIII.

All at once a distant roar seemed to wake the echoes of the place as if someone were smashing the glories. I woke once more. My mind was clear and sane. It all came back like a hideous dream. I tried to sleep again. 'Twas no use. I saw it all so

clearly, the loss of the past few days. My blood was sopping through my veins; the fever burnt and scorched. I ached in every bone. I had lost all I could lose and still live on. "Helpless" was the word that tortured me long and hard. For six days and nights I had not tasted food. I was not hungry, and did not want to eat. I made up my mind that was my way out. I would never taste food again. The nurses coaxed, the doctors said I must, but firmly I refused. They seemed to realize my intention, so in the evening of the seventh day the nurses came to my room. The matron raised me up, tipped back my head and literally poured down my throat a cup of beef tea. Without a word they left me. The next morning I was starving. The matron came in and asked me what I would have for breakfast. I told her fried eggs, sausage, coffee, and toast. Soon she returned bringing everything I had ordered. And then she fed me all I could eat. The memory of that breakfast will linger as long as I have thoughts. Later, when they cut my rations to one soft-boiled egg and a slice of toast, I asked them why they did not bring me something to eat like they did before. The matron very decidedly said, "Shut your mouth; don't ever mention that breakfast to a living soul. I fed you your last meal that morning. I expected you to die soon, and I decided to start you on with at least one good meal."

For five weeks it steadily grew worse and worse. There I was in that hospital with the doctors and the nurses. They all did what they could, but their kindly efforts seemed of little use. Higher and higher grew the pile of discarded hopes and happy smiles. Despair and disappointment racked my nights and days.

CHAPTER IX.

Words fall like empty shells when I try to describe that torture, misery, and hell. The days and nights wore slowly away, and each brought more of my dreams, to the ever gone. The physical misery was excruciating, but the mental torture is hard to describe. The thoughts of the future tortured me, and in the midst of my trouble my friends came along. A few spare tears they shed, and I heard them say as they went their way, "My God, it's too bad it didn't kill him." Their expressions were meant to be kind, but they seared my weary soul.

One day the doctor came in. "I have a poem to read to you. It is Edmund Vance Cooke's 'How Did You Die.' We have rechristened it and call it 'Vim.' I am assured it will do you some good." That poem was the first piece of literature that ever made me sit up and take notice. Since that time it has always been with me. It has brightened many dark days. I met the author later. He gave me the poem to use in

my lectures. Even now when I read it, it makes things easier, and helps to brighten the way.

The regular hospital routine I do not need to mention. You who have been there know what a mess of torture and fuss, doctors, lances, and probes! With all of their machinery the hypo needle was crowned above the rest. When nights came with all their ghosts of torture and the voices were hushed, King Opium spoke, seemingly so soothing, and peacefully drove that hideous procession away from my mind. Sleep with morphine was all I could get. For weeks it went on until the habit was fastened as solid as growth in the ground. First, I took it because I was in misery. Soon I liked it so well that without it life was a burden, and all joys were turned to the tortures of hell.

Although it was long years ago, even now days come when food does not satisfy. There isn't anything I can get that is just what I want. That old opium habit! Will I never forget those dreams, the pleasant, quiet rest when I was tired in spite of everything? When I think back to that day in the cabin, what a relief it was! Then when I had my appendix removed it soothed again, but faster and faster the habit grew till the dreams were gone and dejection, melancholy and madness came. I was a wreck, physically and mentally.

Gentle reader, we may think we are hiding from

that torture but it turns on us later a thousand times greater than the first rush of misery, and it makes us square up with old Mother Nature for the things she elected to be. Every imaginable pain in the world came back when I dropped that morphine. No rest, no sleep, nor eating!

CHAPTER X.

In that pile of life's ruin I left many treasures behind; stripped stark naked of health, money, and sweetheart; I faced life alone—blind. Independence went in the bargain, helplessness came in its stead. Two or three fellows left the hospital in coffins. How I prayed to go even that way! The doctors and nurses and some of my friends said that would be wrong. The hospital days were ending, for surely I was getting well. My sweetheart came to see me. I told her, "Well, sis, a half man is my portion, and you march straight along. Get some nice, clean young fellow who is all there and make you a home. You are as free as God's sunshine which I may never see again. Please forget that I am living, and I will never feel that you did me wrong. This is my own misery. I can't drag you in. I'll do the best I can with the mess I've made, and I'll live to the end of life's living, but I must do it alone." When her sobs and tears had ceased, I turned my face to the

bare wall. "For the strength of the hills I bless thee, Oh God, Oh Gracious God!"

CHAPTER XI.

The first hospital days were ended. At last the time for going home arrived. The matron came, in her kindness and said, "My boy, who will wait on you there?"

"Now look here, Mrs. Hunter, the Lord only knows. Five years from today I'll do it myself, everything that I'll have to have done."

She laughed, "You are crazy."

"Yes, I know I am, but whether it's pleasure or sorrow, joy or fun, listen, Mrs. Hunter, I will do everything that I will have to have done. While I may be crazy, I have a whole herd of crazy friends, so fare you well, Mrs. Hunter, hospital, doctors, and all."

We went to the station and then began the grinding and winding through the mountains once more. It was a sad little procession that started toward home. The great mountains hovered along either side of the way. The golden rays of sunlight that poured over the cliffs seemed like a benediction, the sacredness of it all. The valleys and mountains were covered with pure white snow. The frost had decked them with diamonds, and the clear, bracing air was strong with life to a man who stepped on the platform of

a little station called "Home." With glad hearts we usually come to that mansion or cottage where our life began, but this day 'twas with sorrow, disappointment and shame. My body was broken and everything gone. I had lost to the extent of my losing, and the pitiful greeting was sad. The neighbors gathered in to see the misfortune. All the kids were there and Mother and Dad.

CHAPTER XII.

Let me pause here to discuss with pride my forefathers and homefolks. Ephraim K. Hanks, my grandfather, was a first cousin of Abraham Lincoln's mother, Nancy Hanks. My other grandfather, N. C. Murdock, was a nephew of General Stacy who fought the English on Bunker Hill. Both of my grand-dads were Utah pioneers. Hanks joined the battalion that fought in the Mexican war. Murdock drove an ox team, or more commonly known a yoke of bulls, from St. Joe, Mo., to Salt Lake City, Utah, when he was but a lad of thirteen years. My father was one of those clean, strong out-of-door men. He found most pleasure in the mountains, hunting, and fishing. I used to go along. My mother was a thoroughbred, with large dark eyes and black hair, unconquerable, and knew no limit to her love and kindness. Seven brothers and three sisters made

twelve in the family. Both grandfathers, my father and mother, and one kid brother have taken that long trip over the range, and according to the creed which they believed, they have gone to their reward.

To start all over seemed hard, but it rang from the forests and mountains, from every man that I met. Some of their eyes were filled with moisture. Tears dropped like showers of rain. "Can you start all over?" seemed the words they would whisper. That was the question. It grew bigger and bigger each day. "To start all over that's the thing to do, I know, but just what way? What can I do?" Still tortured! It seemed hopeless. The harder I tried, the less I did. The little things grew bigger. The details were a mountain of difficulties. I could not dress, wash, comb my hair, or brush my teeth, had to be led wherever I went, and all my money was gone. I didn't have a cent. Steadily this thing grew; born of trouble, misery, disappointment till I learned my great lesson, "Man, it's up to you!"

CHAPTER XIII.

After five weeks of confinement in my room, I learned to dress myself. To feed myself was very simple when I learned the trick. The comb and the tooth brush are part of the game. They worked like a charm. This was the glimmer of my first independence. It came with a flash. To earn a living was

the next problem. That puzzled me most. I tried the store business. It was a sad failure. I started selling things; but that was no better I think. Something where the success depended upon me, that is what I wanted, but Oh, Great God! what could that be?

A burden on the home folks! That would never do! So one blustery April morning, with a small boy and a grip of knitwear, I went to work taking orders and selling. All I needed was a monkey and string! I felt like a vendor. I displayed my wares in the midst of customer's praises. "Yes, we'll give you an order to help you." Those were the small ones. Orders miswritten, and wrong measurements, made this selling a torment, but bills at the hospital and doctors' fees made it positively necessary to swallow my pride and walk straight forward.

When the springtime was over and the summer was gone I had a few hard-earned dollars. The doctors were paid, and the hospital too. A glimmer of light in my left eye shimmered and shrank, better and bad, till the oculist said, "There is a chance in ten thousand; we must do it now." I went to the bank to borrow some money. They turned me down. What else could they do? Most of my friends came along with their pocket books empty. They couldn't raise a cent. With the light in that eye fast fading, I swallowed my independence and pride, and went

straight to the hospital and asked them for credit. They gave it.

CHAPTER XIV.

The nurses were strange and the place was new. I did not know how to find my way outside of my room. It was late in the evening when the night nurse came. "Are you ready for bed, Mr. Hanks? In other words would you like to turn in? Is there anything I can do to help you? If there is I'll be glad."

"Thank you, Miss Groesbeck, please hang my night-shirt on the foot of the bed. I can manage the rest very nicely. Good night."

She, however, like most women, didn't believe me. She didn't think I could undress without my fingers or sight. She closed the door, but the latch didn't click, and I wondered. These ears of mine do not fool me often, so I waited and listened. Soon the door swung softly open. The latch was released very gently, but I heard the thing slide. All the nurses in the hospital gathered in the hall in front of my door. They were a jolly bunch—some half dozen or more. My shoes came off with a thump and slid to their place by the bedpost while the nurses looked in amazement. I thought, "Stay with it, old girls, if you have the nerve. I'll give you a demonstration if that's all you crave." My coat and vest came next,

and I hung them on the bedpost. I unbuttoned my collar and chucked both shirts into a corner. Then I picked up the nightshirt that she had left on the foot of the bed. Down came my trousers and underwear and the nightshirt lowered just right. I hung them on the bedpost, turned and took hold of the door with my left arm and addressed them, "Now girls, I don't mean any harm, but when you lose your fingers and eyes, that's the way to do it!" They scattered like chaff in a windstorm! I never did know where they went. I closed the door while they were yet going, and rolled down on the bed. Many minutes of laughter have followed the events of that unhappy night. I worried about my debt to the doctors and hospital; the next day the operation added more misery. "No wonder you are feeling so wretched," said the doctor when he came in. "Why, this is appendicitis. An operation is all that will help." I wanted to kick or kill him. I had heard that word so much that "operation" was the signal for hate. I told him "Go on about your business and leave me alone. Operation, the devil! I will go to hell first." The nurses came back. They were sure that I knew they were there.

CHAPTER XV.

The operation for appendicitis came later, and the day that my appendix was removed I fought them at

the hospital. Two of the nurses I threw over the bed fighting chloroform, and I proved to those implicated that I was far from being dead. Oh, you nurses that hover over pleasure and pain, how I have loved you. Later, I married one, a graduate nurse; ah, she is a wonderful woman! She was raised in the blue grass country of old Kentucky. I call her my thoroughbred, and she likes the name.

In due time the bandage was lifted. Just the glimmer of sight was there. No change, only the eye was miserably sore. The doctor looked it over carefully. "We must try once more. Go back to the country and get well. Come in and we will cut it again." Over and over this happened, five times, and the result was the same, except the last, and then it was all dark. Yes, it was gone, the last ray of light.

CHAPTER XVI.

At the end of the first two years I had paid the doctors and hospitals $1,350.00. I earned it, every cent. I sold and bought, and gathered up mining stocks. In the midst of my misery I had lots of fun. Oh, this race for money, its trouble and smash! But we can endure the wreck of fortunes. It doesn't matter how much cash we lose, we can get it again. The loss of our money is a little thing, but when we lose that which we cannot reclaim, buy, borrow,

or hire, we have a real loss. When we say "Goodbye" to health, happiness, friends, or the last great treasure, our good name—most of these, once lost, we never can regain. So plod along and don't whine. Let your last treasures slip down there with mine. Broke again? Yes, I was broke. Didn't have a red cent, but the hospitals were paid and the doctors too. "I'll just start all over." This I said when I found it all dark, and no hope for the light to come again. "I am much better off than I was before. Wait, while I take stock. I can walk, wash, dress myself, comb, brush my teeth, wipe my nose, and do the other necessary things, and I can travel. On the trains I am at home. Shucks, I'll get along."

The memories of my teachers in school days came back with a rush. A great light fell into the darkness that brought me a glimmer of hope. I could study, but how? That was the thing that stuck in my brain and wrecked everything. After a while there came a great teacher. His name was Byron W. King. He showed me how to begin and what to study. He gave me those lessons in my hour of need, and the King folks helped me memorize and reclaim part of the things that were gone. If I were a preacher I would say, "God bless you all, you showed me the way." But the fate of the teacher and preacher is hard, for the good gifts they hand us are many times taken in unconcern. So it was with the great Master Teacher.

Christ gave his best to the lowly, His life, efforts and all. Inasmuch as you do it, you teachers, your hearts shall swell under your crowns. Whether you give it to students, city, or town, the great thing is the giving, and in the last great hour of your lives, your souls must develop and grow, and to the highest point of development you will go. Let me cheer you on in your missions of goodness to the last great finish of life, for in that day your reward will come clear above the struggle and strife.

CHAPTER XVII.

You fellows may think you are hard up—education impossible. There was a time when it seemed so to me. I had finished all my lecture dates in the year 1915. I could deliver a lecture but I had nothing to say. To learn new things was up to me. Tortured by many doubts and fears I took two ragged grips and started toward my first great university. After I had bought my ticket to Leland Stanford, California, I had $35.00 left. When I came to my hotel I heard a familiar voice, and my heart warmed.

"My old friend, Professor John C. Swensen. God must have sent you to say 'Goodbye.'"

"Why? Where are you going?"

"Stanford tomorrow."

"Do you know anybody there?"

"No."

"I have no gold to help you on your way, but I graduated from Stanford, and I know them well. I will give you a letter of introduction to Dr. Elliot. He is the Registrar."

"Thank you, John, I know it will help me greatly."

Through the snow sheds, over the Sierra Nevadas to Sacramento, on to San Francisco, the Exposition too, and then to Palo Alto. There is where I landed with fifteen dollars to get an education. Did it ever happen to you? If not, you have something to live for. I found a boarding house on the campus. The next job was to learn the way to the University, class rooms, and all. Many times I bumped my nose, and sometimes took a fall, but soon I learned to find my way over the steps and stairways, through the arches and about the quad. I went to classes every morning. History was the best. Political Science, German, French and English, each had a turn. How I look back on those glorious days when I learned things I did not know! I lectured in the evenings and on week ends to earn a living. During the days I stuck to school. David Starr Jordan and his Binomics, International Conciliation too; the best lectures I ever heard flowed from his master mind. Two and a half years I stayed there and listened.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Gentle reader, if you shed a tear, let it be one of joy, for all these cuts, scars, and gashes have long since grown together with cleaner, stronger, finer tissue than before. Eighteen long years have rolled away since that humble beginning. I have wandered this great land through and through. High schools, colleges, universities, and the great seats of American democracy have been my haunts. Five thousand dollars I have spent in schools and earned it all. Seven lectures and fifty thousand memorized words from classical literature are in my possession today. I have tried not to pause or stop, but to march straight along. All the good things in the world are ours if we but take them, students, teachers, all.

Before I finish let me take stock. Personal dependence has really flown away. For sixteen years I have traveled and paid my bills, lectured and entertained for it mostly. Two and a half years at Leland Stanford University, school of oratory, and teachers by the score. Ten thousand miles rolled under my feet last year, and now I will go some more. I have a home in Heber, Utah, and one at Heyburn, Idaho, too. My greatest treasure is there in Idaho. There is a heart that beats with loyal cheer. At the hospital I found her. When I was left stark and alone she came, the richest gift of life's treasures.

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